

NELS JOSEPH JOHNSON AND MARY ANN ORGILL JOHNSON



Nels Joseph Johnson was born June 26, 1870 in Peoa, Summit County, a son of Ola and Marna Walters Johnson. He married Elizabeth Moore at Coalville, July 18, 1896. After her death on June 8, 1898, he married Mary Ann Orgill March 22, 1900. Nels died May 22, 1950.

Mary Ann Orgill was born in Mt. Pleasant, Sanpete County, January 9, 1877, a daughter of Mark and Rachel Isabelle Smith Orgill. She died March 26, 1952.

Nels was the oldest son of Ola and Marna Walters Johnson. His family moved to Heber City when Nels was four years old. He attended public schools in Heber. His early years were spent in helping farmers

in the hay fields. When he reached young manhood he obtained his first job with Thackers Sawmill at Strawberry. He worked until he became the engineer at the mill.

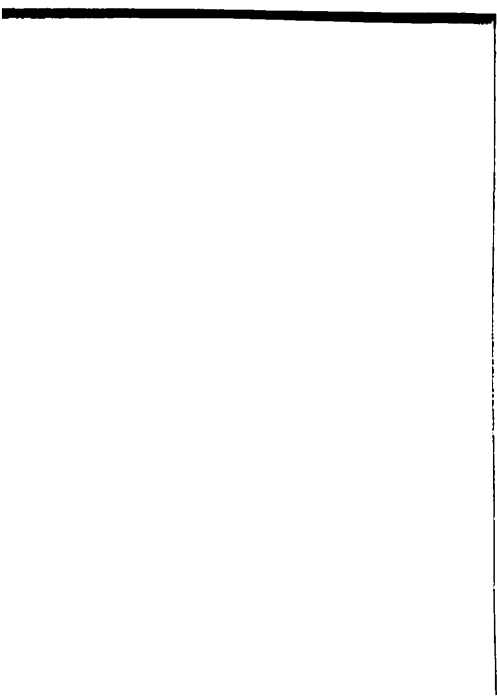
In the winter months he obtained a job in Hatch's Flour Mill and learned the milling business. When the plane sifter system was installed in the Heber Mill by the Barnard and Leighs Company, he was the first miller to learn to run this system. Then this same company installed the system in mills in Oakley, Kamas and Wanship. They hired Mr. Johnson to go to these mills and instruct other millers in the plane sifter system. It was during this time that he met and married Elizabeth Moore. They lived at Oakley, where he supervised these three mills. It was here that the couple's two children were born, Merne and Nels. Elizabeth died shortly after the birth of her son, and the little Nels passed away five months later. After the death of his wife and child he came back to Wasatch county to work in Hatch's Mill again.

Millers at Kamas became unhappy with their work and wanted to quit their jobs so Nels and his brother A. O. Johnson purchased the mill in Kamas and this became Johnson's Brothers Milling Company.

In 1900 Nels married Mary Ann Orgill. They lived at Hatch's mill until after the birth of their first son. In 1902 Nels and his brother purchased the Midway Mill from Mark Jeffs. This partnership continued some fifteen years. Then a coin was flipped to see who would take possession of the Midway Mill. The coin fell in Nels' favor. He paid A. O. the sum of \$5,000 and gave him his share in the Kamas mill because the Midway Mill was considered a better location.

Midway Roller Mills drew on a large territory of Uintah Basin and Wasatch County, and friends that Nels had made in Summit County still patronized his business and did so until he died. Indians came from the reservation, and the government paid a percentage of the cost of grinding besides the toll the Indians paid so they would not be left waiting to have their grain ground. They came by the hundreds and camped overnight in the empty ponds and flat country south of the mill.

During World War I the mill ran day and night to produce flour for the government. This flour was packed in burlap sacks that weighed 140 lbs, when filled. The flour



was shipped to Houston, Texas. People were rationed on the white flour they could use and had to purchase substitute flours. Mr. Johnson acted as government agent in this and made weekly reports.

He was in the milling business sixty years. He served as chairman of the amusement board in Midway, also as a county commissioner for Wasatch County. He owned stock in the Heber Mercantile and Heber City Exchange and was a director in the later concern until his death. He was a member of the Executive Council, Boy Scouts of America and awarded the first eighty-one badges given to Scouts in the county.

Mr. Johnson worked in his mill and supervised his large farm until four years before his death in 1950, at the age of eighty years.

Mary Ann Orgill was the oldest of fourteen children. Her family moved to Daniels Creek when she was eight years old. She was educated in the public schools of Wasatch County.

When Mary reached the age of fourteen, she began to do house work in various homes in the county. She received three dollars a month for her efforts. With this money she bought several items of furniture for her family, and helped buy clothes for her brothers and sisters. She continued on in this work until she was twenty-three years old. She met Nels J. Johnson when she worked in the home of President Abram Hatch in Heber. She and Mr. Johnson were married at her home in Daniels Creek, with President Hatch officiating. The couple made their home in the house provided for the millers close to the mill. They lived here until after the birth of her son. They moved to Midway in 1902.

Mrs. Johnson loved to garden and she had a large garden by her house. She also raised chickens and ducks, geese and turkeys to help supplement the family income.

She did fine sewing, making exquisite embroidery as well as tatting and crocheting. She sewed for her large family and made countless quilts that found their way into homes of brothers, sisters, children and grandchildren.

A little daughter was left to her husband at the death of his first wife, and she cared for her and shared her love and care with this child. A niece also was given this same care and love during the years she made her home in this family.

Mrs. Johnson loved books and music and

recited many poems and sang many songs from memory. She loved The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and was an active member. She was Relief Society visiting teacher for many years and headed the visiting teacher classes. She was the social science class leader for many years, and president of the same organization for eight years. She taught a missionary class in the Sunday School organization for about fifteen years. These services were performed in the Midway 1st Ward. Her marriage was solemnized in the Salt Lake Temple, September 24, 1920.

Children of Nels and Elizabeth included: Mrs. Ellis (Merne Schoney) Edwards; Nels Johnson, born June 7, and died October 1, 1898.

Children of Nels and Mary Ann included: George William, married Jennie Pyper; Ronald Mark, married Hazel Lewis; Mrs. W. W. (Elizabeth) Newby; Mrs. Mead (Lucile) Whiting; Mrs. William (Mildred) Larsen; Ralph Joseph, married Fawn Clyde; Mrs. Clifford (Loretta) Sherwood.
